

ASSEMBLY HALL,  
TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> November, 1959  
at 2.45 p.m.

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**ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY**

present a Bi-centenary Festival Performance of Handel's

**MESSIAH**

**THELMA GODFREY** (Soprano)

**CAROLINE FOSTER** (Contralto)

**DUNCAN ROBERTSON** (Tenor)

**RICHARD STANDEN** (Bass)

Solo Trumpet: **DAVID MASON**

**FULL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

(Leader: Ronald Good)

CHORUS OF APPROXIMATELY 200 VOICES

Conductor:

**Dr. HAROLD MAY**

*The National Federation of Music Societies supports this Concert with  
Funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain*

**Programme - 6d.**

# MESSIAH

This, Handel's greatest masterpiece, is once again being performed to-day so that we can join in paying homage to this great composer, who although German born, and never really mastering the English language, left such an indelible mark on the English musical life of his time, and all time, that it will surely never be erased. Handel's output was enormous; operas, anthems, concertos, and all types of music poured from his pen during his lifetime, but he is remembered more for his oratorios (of which form he was the originator) than the rest. Of these, **Messiah** has never lost its great appeal, and now 200 years after his death it is more frequently performed than any other comparable work, although, let it be said, not always as well as the superb music demands. Far too many singers are apt to say that they *know* **Messiah**; but how many really do, or ever will? Description of the work itself would be impossible unless one had many pages available, and many great writers and musicians have endeavoured to accomplish such a task, with varying success. Suffice it to say that the music so vividly portrays the life of Jesus Christ and His triumph over sin and death, brought to a climax in Handel's greatest chorus 'WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN', that one understands what Sir Malcolm Sargent means, when he says, that if granted one more wish before his death it would be 'to conduct just one more performance of **Messiah**'.

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**Thelma Godfrey** has performed with the Society on two previous occasions, at East Grinstead three years ago, and also in 'Elijah' at St. John's Church, Tunbridge Wells, just a year since. She has always delighted our audiences with her splendid singing and charming personality; we welcome her again and look forward to a fine performance.

**Caroline Foster** makes the long journey to-day from Manchester because when the Society was taking part in a Festival performance of 'Elijah' in Canterbury Cathedral last year we considered this young contralto the outstanding soloist in the performance, and invited her to be with us to-day. We hope she will take back happy memories of a southern **Messiah**, since she comes from the North, where they know something about this work!

**Duncan Robertson** comes from Scotland, and we are very pleased to welcome him to Tunbridge Wells. He has had great success in important roles at Glyndebourne during the Summer, and in the opinion of many good judges is a young tenor of great potential. Since Glyndebourne he has broadcast for the B.B.C. in several important choral and operatic works, including Oedipus Rex on Monday last, conducted by Stravinsky.

**Richard Standen** is a well established and distinguished oratorio singer, who last appeared here in 1950. It has been too long since we heard him in Tunbridge Wells and we extend a most warm welcome to him on his return.

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Our thanks are due to Mr. Ronald Good for leading the Orchestra once again, and for engaging distinguished professional players; to Mrs. Dorothy Berry for rehearsing the local orchestral players, and to those members of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra who have, as always, readily agreed to play for us.

PART I.

- No.
1. OVERTURE.
  2. RECIT. (Tenor)—“Comfort ye My people.”
  3. AIR (Tenor) “Ev’ry valley shall be exalted.”
  4. CHORUS —“And the glory of the Lord.”
  5. RECIT. (Bass) —“Thus saith the Lord.”
  6. AIR (Bass)—“But who may abide the day of His coming?”
  8. RECIT. (Contralto)—“Behold, a virgin shall conceive.”
  9. AIR (Contralto) & CHORUS—“O thou that tellest good tidings.”
  10. RECIT. (Bass)—“For behold, darkness shall cover the earth.”
  11. AIR (Bass)—“The people that walked in darkness.”
  12. CHORUS—“For unto us a child is born.”
  14. RECIT. (Soprano)—“There were shepherds abiding in the field.”
  15. RECIT. (Soprano)—“And the angel said unto them.”
  16. RECIT. (Soprano)—“And suddenly there was with the angel.”
  17. CHORUS —“Glory to God.”
  18. AIR (Soprano)—“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!”
  19. RECIT. (Contralto)—“Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened.”
  20. AIR (Contralto & Soprano)—“He shall feed His flock like a shepherd.”
  21. CHORUS —“His yoke is easy and His burden is light.”

Sunday, 6th December    Assembly Hall    2.45 p.m.

**Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra**

**BEETHOVEN PROGRAMME**

Overture, Coriolanus                  Violin Concerto in D  
Symphony No. 6 in F, The Pastoral

*Solo Violin* : **Ralph Holmes**      *Conductor* : **John Hollingsworth**

Tickets from Assembly Hall Box Office

PART II.

- No.
22. CHORUS—"Behold the Lamb of God."
23. AIR (Contralto)—"He was despised and rejected."
24. CHORUS—"Surely He hath borne our griefs."
25. CHORUS—"And with His stripes we are healed."
26. CHORUS—"All we like sheep have gone astray."
27. RECIT. (Tenor)—"All they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn."
28. CHORUS—"He trusted in God that He would deliver Him."
29. RECIT. (Tenor)—"Thy rebuke hath broken His heart."
30. AIR (Tenor)—"Behold, see if there be any sorrow."
31. RECIT. (Tenor)—"He was cut off out of the land of the living."
32. AIR (Tenor)—"But thou did'st not leave His soul in hell."
33. CHORUS—"Lift up your heads, O ye gates."

INTERVAL OF FIVE MINUTES ONLY.

37. CHORUS—"The Lord gave the word."
38. AIR (Soprano)—"How beautiful are the feet."
39. CHORUS—"Their sound is gone out into all lands."
40. AIR (Bass)—"Why do the nations so furiously rage together."
41. CHORUS—"Let us break their bonds asunder."
42. RECIT. (Tenor)—"He that dwelleth in heaven."
43. AIR (Tenor)—"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron."
44. CHORUS—"Hallelujah."

Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our  
Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever  
and ever.

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!

PART III.

- No.  
45. AIR (Soprano) — "I know that my Redeemer liveth."  
46. CHORUS — "Since by man came death."  
47. CHORUS — "By man came also the resurrection of the dead."  
48. CHORUS — "For as in Adam all die."  
49. CHORUS — "Even so in Christ shall all be made alive."  
50. RECIT. (Bass) — "Behold, I tell you a mystery."  
51. AIR (Bass) — "The trumpet shall sound."  
(Solo Trumpet: DAVID MASON.)  
56. CHORUS — "Worthy is the Lamb."  
57. CHORUS — "Amen."
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Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

Sunday, 13th December, 1959      Assembly Hall      3 p.m.

**CAROLS**, with OWEN BRANNIGAN (Bass-Baritone)

Walter Neal and Marjorie Vinall (2 pianofortes)

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Wednesday, 2nd March, 1960      Christ Church, Tunbridge Wells  
7.30 p.m.

**MASS in B MINOR** (J. S. Bach)

Adrienne Cole (Soprano)      Sylvia Rowlands (Contralto)

Stephen Manton (Tenor)      Bryan Drake (Bass)

Walter Neal (Organ)      Orchestra

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Wednesday, <sup>4th MAY</sup>~~6th April~~, 1960      St. Luke's Church, Tunbridge Wells  
7.30 p.m.

**HYMN OF PRAISE**

(Mendelssohn)

**STABAT MATER**

(Rossini)

Iris Kells (Soprano)      Patricia Cracknell (Mezzo-Soprano)

John Stoddart (Tenor)      Norman Tattersall (Baritone)

Walter Neal (Organ)      Orchestra

# Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

(56th Season)

*President* : SIR GEORGE DYSON

*Vice-Presidents* :

HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR (Councillor Norman Glanfield, J.P.)

THE DEPUTY MAYOR (Alderman S. H. Muffett)

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Mr. & Mrs. L. J. Fuller	Miss E. M. Parker	Mr. G. A. Wright
Miss M. C. Gordon	Mr. J. F. W. Passmore	

Singing membership of the Society is open to all who sing. **New members are welcomed** (subject to a private audition by the Conductor). Those who would like to join may come to any rehearsal or write to the Hon. Secretary: Mr. CYRIL WOOD, c/o. Ibbett, Mosely, Card & Co., 7, London Road, Tunbridge Wells. (Tel. 446/7).

**Rehearsals**: Christ Church Hall, High Street on Mondays, at 7 p.m. from September to May.

**Annual Subscription**: £1 1s. (reduction for those under 21).

The Society is greatly indebted to its Vice-Presidents for their support, which helps to bridge the serious gap between income and expenditure which nearly always arises in giving choral concerts. It is hoped that all those interested in the performance of choral music will become Vice-Presidents by contributing at least one guinea a year.